

CLAIMS

WE CLAIM

1. A method of treating a ceramic core, comprising placing an unfired ceramic (core having a binder) on at least one setter, placing the setter and the green ceramic core thereon on a conveyor that conveys the setter and the green core through a heating oven, and conveying the setter and the green ceramic core through the heating oven to heat the setter and the green ceramic core to an elevated superambient temperature.

2. The method of claim 1 wherein the setter and the green ceramic core are heated to a superambient temperature above a softening temperature of the binder present in the unfired core.

3. The method of claim 2 including controlling the rate of travel of the conveyor such that the setter and the unfired ceramic core are heated to said superambient temperature when they are located proximate an exit opening of the heating oven.

4. The method of claim 1 including removing the setter and the unfired ceramic core from the conveyor after exiting the heating oven so that the setter and the green ceramic core can cool to ambient temperature. *obv.*

5. The method of claim 4 wherein the setter supplies heat to the unfired ceramic core after exiting the heating oven and during cooling to ambient temperature. *obv.*

6. The method of claim 1 wherein the unfired ceramic core conforms to a surface of the setter after being heated to said superambient temperature. *obv.*

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7. The method of claim 1 wherein the unfired ceramic core is placed between a top setter and a bottom setter and is conveyed through the heating oven between the top setter and bottom setter. *adv.*

8. The method of claim 1 wherein the unfired ceramic core includes an airfoil region.

9. The method of claim 1 wherein the binder comprises a thermosetting binder.

10. The method of claim 1 wherein the binder comprises a thermoplastic binder.

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